

Charlotte R. Hitchcock
66 Elmwood Road
New Haven, CT 06515
203.397.2432
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Members of the Appropriations Committee
Connecticut State Legislature

Re: Oppose Loss of Community Investment Act Funds (Bill 828, Sec 1w)

I urge you not to raid the funding provided by the \$30 real estate transaction fee. This fund for the Community Investment Act was approved by us, the taxpayers, with the promise that the money would be permanently directed to preserve farmland, open space, and historic resources, and to provide affordable housing.

As a supporter of numerous key nonprofit organizations including the American Farmland Trust, CT Forest & Park Assn., CT Fund for the Environment, CT Trust for Historic Preservation, 1000 Friends of CT, the Nature Conservancy, and Trust for Public Land, I support the complementary missions of the four areas to which the funds are applied.

It would be unconscionable to renege on this promise and use the funds for stopgap measures during an economic downturn.

The need for **farmland preservation** is greater than ever, as the need to feed ourselves locally becomes more urgent.

The need for **open space** is always pressing, to combat climate change and to increase recreational opportunities in a densely populated state. And now there are opportunities to acquire open space property for better prices than in recent years.

Historic preservation is essential to the character of our state; both historic tourism and sustainable development are anchored by the historic towns and landscapes of the state.

Finally, **affordable housing** is never needed more than during bad economic times. Funds for housing development provide permanent housing, but also provide jobs in the construction industry and related professions, all of which are hard hit at times like these.

Again, the Community Reinvestment Act should NOT be a victim of the budget shortfall, both because of the promise of dedicated funding inherent in its creation, and because its uses are themselves stimuli of economic development which we need at this time.

Sincerely yours,

Charlotte R. Hitchcock